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FURTHER RECOLLECTIONS OF GETTYSBURG.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL DANIEL E. SICKLES,

MAJOR-GENERAL D. MM. GREGG,

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN NEWTON,

AND

MAJOR-GENERAL DANIEL BUTTERFIELD.

GENERAL SICKLES:

IT WAS indeed an event of rare interest to meet on the battlefield of Gettysburg, on a golden October morning, the best historian of the battle and of the Civil War, our comrade and friend, the Comte de Paris, himself a veteran volunteer of the war; and by his side the son of one of our veterans, a gallant young recruit, the Duc d'Orleans. We miss the knightly Duc de Chartres, another veteran volunteer drawn from the ranks of the royal house of France; but we have with us the Marquis de Lasterie, descendant of Lafayette. Here in the cemetery of dead heroes, under the shadow of the great Reynolds, are assembled in the same group for the first time since the battle all but one of the living corps commanders who fought here, Slocum, Howard, Sickles, Newton, Doubleday; and the leaders of the divisions, Gregg and Wright. We miss Pleasonton, commander of the cavalry corps, kept away by illness, but we have Butterfield, chief of staff. The men who made history surrounded the historian.

The strongest emotion of the visitor to Gettysburg is the memory of those who here nobly fell in battle—"those who here

gave their lives that the nation might live." Volunteers of 1861-2-3, flower of our young manhood, the loved ones of our Northern homes, volunteers without bounty, men gold could not hire, for whom the flag and the Union were worth all else; men who had only a home to live for and a country to die for. And the great leaders, where are they?—Meade, commander-in-chief; Reynolds, who fell on the first day; Hancock, on the third; Sedgwick, Warren, Buford, Hunt, Kilpatrick. Nor can we forget Hooker, who reorganized the army and led it almost here, his chosen field, compelling Lee to give battle.

The transition from 1863 to 1890, little more than a quarter of a century, almost confounds the imagination, and makes the reality seem like a dream. Now we are more than sixty millions, all freemen, united, prosperous, tranquil. Then we were separated, mangled by the struggles of a great civil war of unforeseen duration, nearly all Europe against us, every resource of men and treasure strained to the utmost tension, no one able to forecast the boundaries which the end of the conflict would define.

The Army of the Potomac has lost the peninsular campaign; it has lost Pope's campaign, and, although it has won Antietam, it has lost Burnside's campaign, and Chancellorsville. The situation at home and abroad is grave. The insurrection that burst upon New York a few days after the battle is already imminent; it is visible in June. England and Napoleon are hostile to the Union, waiting for a suitable pretext to recognize the Southern Confederacy. Public opinion everywhere is much estranged by the Conscription Act of Congress. Resistance is openly threatened. The Proclamation of Emancipation, the organization of colored troops, and kindred measures have alienated large numbers of people. An impression, almost a belief, gains ground that for military, economical, and political reasons the success of the North is doubtful. Such is the general opinion in Europe. It is feared that the enormous cost of the war makes it impossible to prolong the struggle. It is apprehended that, in the absence of volunteers, the losses caused in our armies by desertions, disease, and battles cannot be filled up by bounties or conscriptions; and we have not yet found a commander who inspires at once the government, the people, and the armies with confidence in his ability to lead us to victory.

I would not have seen Gettysburg had Hooker not sent me a message summoning me from New York, where I was slowly recovering from a contusion received at Chancellorsville. He announced the coming battle, asking me to join my command instantly, giving such urgent and flattering reasons that I could not refuse, although my surgeons, Carnochan and Sayres, protested. I reached headquarters at Frederick on the 28th of June, at the hour Hooker was relieved by Meade. Hardie, who was the bearer of the order putting Meade in command, sat by my side from Washington to Frederick, chatting all the way, without revealing a word of his mission. The change in the command of the army was no sooner announced—Hooker sacrificed, on the eve of battle, by the action of Halleck—than I heard from Hayden, and others of my personal friends, earnest remonstrances against my serving under Meade. They knew he was hostile, dating from several incidents in the Chancellorsville campaign. I consult Hooker. He says: “You cannot ask to be relieved on the eve of battle; wait at least until after the engagement.” This advice coinciding with my inclinations, I resumed command of the Third Army Corps.

Lee crossed the Potomac on his second invasion of the North at the head of the largest and best-equipped army the South had yet put in the field. It believed itself invincible. It had won many signal victories. It was stronger than ever in numbers, equipment, organization, and discipline. It was led by able corps and division commanders. Lieutenant-General Hood says: “Never before or since have I witnessed such intense enthusiasm as prevailed throughout the entire Confederate army. Exulting cheers reëchoed all along the line. Our forces marched undisturbed to Chambersburg. I found General Lee in the same buoyant spirits which pervaded his magnificent army. After the ordinary salutations he exclaimed: ‘Ah, General, the enemy is a long time finding us. If he does not succeed soon, we must go in search of him.’”

Hooker and the Army of the Potomac were not as far off as Lee and his lieutenant supposed. Hooker had no superior in manœuvring a large army. The campaigns of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg are monuments of his strategical skill. Lee’s cavalry, under Stuart, were on a long raid and failed to discover Hooker crossing the Potomac at Edwards’s Ferry. Pleasonton

and his cavalry gave us eyes to see Lee's marches and movements, while they blindfolded Lee so that he could not see ours until Hooker was on his rear and flank challenging him to battle.

Lee commands a halt in sight of Harrisburg, on the Susquehanna. What is the matter? His communications are threatened. His retreat may become impossible. He must give or accept battle. He directs the concentration of all his forces at Gettysburg. This was Hooker's revenge for Chancellorsville. Ewell had reconnoitred that position a few days before. It was admirable for the invading army, because it afforded facilities for advance or retreat. And if Lee is quick in his concentration, he may choose a battle-ground as advantageous to him as Fredericksburg. And so it might have been, if bold and sagacious Buford had not stood in the way with a division of cavalry the counterpart of himself.

The battle of Oak Ridge, on July 1, was a surprise to both armies. It, however, gave to Howard the choice of position at Gettysburg, and was worth all its cost, forcing Lee to offensive tactics. General Lee says: "The enemy occupied the point which General Ewell designed to seize. The strong position which the enemy had assumed could not be attacked without danger of exposing the four divisions present, already weakened and exhausted by a long and bloody struggle, to overwhelming numbers of fresh troops." These fresh troops were Birney's division of Sickles's corps and a division of Slocum's corps, the corps commanders both present. Well might General Lee speak of his four divisions as "weakened and exhausted by a long and bloody struggle." The great fight of Robinson's division of the First Corps is an illustration of the terrible conflict at Oak Ridge. Out of 2,500 men on the field, Robinson lost 1,600 in killed and wounded. Hotly engaged for four hours on a July day against overwhelming numbers, repulsing repeated attacks of the enemy, capturing three flags and a very large number of prisoners, they were the last to leave the field. Says Robinson in a letter to Meade, soon after the battle: "We have been proud of our efforts on that day and hope that they will be recognized. It is but natural we should feel disappointed that we are not once referred to in the report of the commanding general."

Lee expected to make his concentration at Gettysburg unopposed. Meade expected to concentrate on his chosen line of Pike

Creek without interference. Strange, but not impossible, that two mighty armies, eager for combat, in near proximity to each other, like two giants groping in the dark, can march and manœuvre without the presence of one being known to the other.

At Oak Ridge the enemy had four divisions of infantry, Heth's, Pender's, Rodes's, and Early's—seventeen brigades; and sixteen batteries of artillery—the battalions of Pegram, McIntosh, Carter, and Jones. We had the First Corps—seven brigades and five batteries; and the Eleventh Corps—six brigades and five batteries; that is to say, thirteen brigades and ten batteries. The enemy were four brigades stronger in infantry, and they had a few more guns.

General Humphreys—good authority—says Lee had about eighty-five thousand infantry at Gettysburg; that is to say, nine divisions of ninety-five hundred each. In other words, Ewell's four divisions gave him thirty-eight thousand infantry against seventeen thousand five hundred under Reynolds and Howard, with a corresponding superiority over us in artillery.

Reynolds's battle was brought on without orders, perhaps against orders, if Reynolds received, as the other corps commanders received, the circular orders from General Meade issued early in the morning of the 1st of July, which were as follows:

“If the enemy assume the offensive and attack, it is his [General Meade's] intention, after holding them in check long enough to withdraw the trains and other impedimenta, to withdraw the army from its present position and form a line of battle with the left resting in the neighborhood of Middleburg and the right at Manchester, the general direction being at Pipe Creek. . . . For this purpose, General Reynolds, in command of the left wing, will withdraw the force at present at Gettysburg, two corps [First and Eleventh], by the road to Taneytown and Westminster, and, after crossing Pipe Creek, deploy towards Middleburg. The corps at Emmitsburg [Sickles's] will be withdrawn via Mechanicsville to Middleburg.”

Reynolds was right in accepting battle as he did, to gain time, as Hancock says, “for the commanding general of the army to come to some decision.” Reynolds's battle was necessarily fought, and well fought, by Buford, Doubleday, Robinson, Wadsworth, Fairchild, Huydekoper, and Barlow, and, after Reynolds fell, by Howard in command.

Accident, so potent in war, overruled the plans of Meade, drifting him towards a position chosen by the enemy; a better battlefield than he had himself chosen, it had for us the ad-

vantages of strong defensive lines and excellent communications, and the enemy was there—sure. Slocum, Hancock, Howard, Sickles, and Doubleday urged Meade that night to come to Gettysburg with all his army. He came. And so swift was the concentration of his forces, under the direction of the chief of staff, that on the morning of the 2d of July his army was in position, except the Sixth Corps, which had a long march from Westminster, thirty miles, and could not reach the field until late in the afternoon.

As these reminiscences are personal, I will dwell a moment on an anxious hour spent at Emmittsburg in the afternoon of the 1st of July, after hearing of the death of Reynolds, and receiving from Howard and Doubleday earnest appeals for support at Gettysburg. My orders from the general commanding were to hold Emmittsburg at all hazards. These orders, of course, were based on the supposition that the enemy's point of concentration would be at or near Emmittsburg, but no enemy was near. Reconnoissances and scouts for miles around gave no indication of the presence or proximity of a hostile force. The situation of Howard, so pressed by superior numbers, was hard to resist. Why stay here in idle security, in formal obedience to orders? What order would Meade give if he were here in person and read Howard's despatch? He would say: "Yes; march to Gettysburg." And so say I: "Yes; I will go, and take the risk of approval. It must be said, at least, that the Third Corps marches in the right direction,—toward the enemy." At 3:15 P. M. I wrote to Howard: "The Third Corps will march to Gettysburg immediately." The column is formed; two brigades under Graham and De Trobriand, with two batteries, are left to hold Emmittsburg. We move forward cheerfully, over a rough road, on a sultry afternoon. We arrive at Gettysburg, marching along the enemy's flank, uninterrupted. The welcome of Howard and his men rewarded us. We saw the proofs of their bloody fight, their resolute bearing, awaiting another attack, intrenched in their strong position on Cemetery Ridge. The Third Corps was massed on their left. At 9:30 that night I wrote to General Meade urging the concentration of his forces at Gettysburg, expressing the opinion that "it is a good battlefield for us, although weak on the left flank." Later in the night I received from General Meade an expression of his approval of my march from Emmittsburg against orders, and also instruc-

tions to bring up the two brigades and batteries I had left at Emmittsburg under Graham and De Trobriand.

The early morning of July 2 was spent reconnoitring my front on the left, choosing positions, gathering information about the roads, and learning something of the force and dispositions of the enemy. The prolongation of the line of Cemetery large, perhaps the more desirable tactical position for me to occupy, unless overruled by superior considerations, proved upon examination to be an unsatisfactory line because of its marked depression and the swampy character of the ground between Cemetery Ridge and Little Round Top. The most commanding position on the field was Little Round Top and the ridge running from it toward the Emmittsburg road. Moreover, to abandon the Emmittsburg road to the enemy would be unpardonable. The force at my disposition, ten thousand men, was insufficient to hold the lines from Cemetery Ridge to Round Top and defend that height, which was obviously the key to our position. Longstreet had thirteen brigades of infantry. I had six brigades. He had sixty guns. I had thirty. Information from scouts and from Buford's cavalry on my flank indicated the presence of considerable bodies of the enemy's forces on my front, concealed in the woods and manœuvring to envelop our left. The ground was rocky and undulated with ridges; convenient roads through woods and valleys gave the enemy excellent opportunities for turning our left flank and gaining our rear.

I had pointed out, the night before, in a letter to General Meade, that our left was our assailable point. Careful study of the field during the morning had confirmed my impressions. At 11 o'clock the reconnoissances of General Berdan with his sharpshooters and Colonel Lake with the 4th Maine revealed the formation of the enemy's columns in large masses, preparing to attack. General Tremain and Colonel Moore, my aides-de-camp, rode over to headquarters again and again all through the morning, reporting the situation of things on my front. Impatient of longer delay, more than ever anxious in view of the certainty of an attack from superior numbers, staggered by the announcement that Buford's division of cavalry had been withdrawn from my flank and ordered to escort trains to Westminster, thirty miles away, I went in person to headquarters and asked General Meade to come with me and reconnoitre the left. He was too busy. I

asked for General Warren ; Warren was busy on the right preparing for an attack by the right wing on Culp's Hill, under Slocum. Butterfield was too busy preparing Meade's orders. Hunt, chief of artillery, was seated near by. I earnestly asked for Hunt, because I needed his advice in placing my own batteries, and others from the reserve which I was sure to require. Hunt was allowed to go with me.

We went over my part of the field together, looked at all the ground, from the swale and swamp between Cemetery Ridge and Round Top, to my proposed line running from Round Top along the ridge to the Emmittsburg road, *en échelon* to Cemetery Ridge and the line of Hancock's corps. Hunt liked my chosen line, pointing out, however, that more troops than I had would be necessary to hold it. Hunt and Randolph, my chief of artillery, found excellent positions for my batteries ; all was in readiness for my advance except orders from headquarters. Hunt assured me I might look for orders as soon as he made his report to General Meade, declining himself to take any responsibility, because he was ignorant of the plans of the general commanding, and so much depended upon his determination to stand on the defensive, or to attack, or to manœuvre for another position. I waited an hour. No orders came. My troops, eager for combat and anxious to profit by all the advantages of the ground, levelled all the fences within their reach. The movements of the enemy became more and more aggressive. Their assault seemed to have been delayed by a change in the route of their columns, caused, as appears from their official reports, by my discovery of their formation and the advantages they found in enveloping our left by a march through the forest, which had been uncovered by the unfortunate withdrawal of Buford's cavalry from the flank.

Impossible to wait longer without giving the enemy serious advantages in his attack, I advanced my line towards the highest ground in my front, occupying the Emmittsburg road at the very point where Longstreet hoped to cross it unopposed, covering Round Top and menacing the enemy's flank if he attempted to turn our left. He accepted battle on my line. Birney's division extended from the Devil's Den, a great mass of boulder rocks, across the wheat fields and Peach Orchard, towards the Emmittsburg road. Humphreys's division held my right and the Emmittsburg road. It was 3 o'clock. The enemy's lines of battle were developing in

enormous strength. The artillery opened fire. I am summoned to headquarters. What can it mean ?

(Circular.)

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, {
July 2, '63, 3 P. M. }

The commanding general desires to see you at headquarters. Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD,

Major-General and Chief of Staff.

Sent to Major-Generals Sedgwick, Sickles, Sykes, Newton, Slocum, Howard, and Hancock.

General Sykes says : " At 3 P. M. General Meade sent for me, and while myself and other commanders were conversing with him the enemy formally opened the battle, and developed his attack on our left. I was at once ordered to throw my whole corps to that point, and hold it all hazards."

It is evident the commanding general has no just appreciation of the gravity of matters on my front. Else why summon me and all the corps commanders to headquarters at such a critical moment ? This question is answered by General Meade's telegram to Halleck, general-in-chief, at the same hour, 3 P. M. July 2 :

"The army is fatigued . . . If not attacked, and I can get any positive information of the position of the enemy which will justify me in so doing, I shall attack. If I find it hazardous to do so, or am satisfied the enemy is endeavoring to move to my rear and interpose between me and Washington, I shall fall back to my supplies at Westminister. . . . I feel fully the responsibility resting upon me, but will endeavor to act with caution."

This telegram from our commanding-general shows that at the supreme moment—3 P. M. July 2—when the enemy was advancing to attack, we had no plan of action, no order of battle. For Meade the battle of July 2 is a surprise, like the battle of July 1. Lee knows what he wants to do ; his corps commanders know his plans ; they know the order of battle ; they are executing it.

Unable to reply in writing, I point out to the staff officer who brought the order the attitude and movements of the enemy, and ask him to beg General Meade to excuse me from complying with the order, as my presence is necessary with my command. A second order comes from headquarters, peremptory, immediate. I reluctantly turn over the command to Birney, and proceed to headquarters. General Meade meets me at his door, saying : " You need not dismount, General. I hear the sound of

cannon on your front. Return to your command. I will join you there at once."

The sound of my guns breaks up the council. We fight here.

Spurring my horse to the utmost speed, I soon relieve Birney. The battle begins with the quickening fire of the skirmishers. General Meade arrives; thinks my line too much extended; too weak to resist the enemy. "Yes," I reply; "but I can hold him until reënforcements arrive. I will contract my line, or modify it, if you prefer. My men are easily manœuvred under fire." "No," said Meade, "it is too late; I will support you. I will order up the Fifth Corps on your left; call upon Hancock to support your centre and right. If you need more artillery send to the reserve for it."

Leaving me with these instructions, I did not see General Meade again, nor receive any communication from him, during the action. The enemy's attack was pressed with all the vigor and boldness characteristic of Longstreet, Lee's ablest lieutenant. The conception of the enemy's movement was based upon Jackson's assault on our right flank at Chancellorsville. The force employed was about the same. The ground, woods, and roads all favored it; and the loss of Buford's cavalry made it practicable. But the menacing attitude of my corps, in close proximity to Longstreet's column, threatening its flank, compelled every inch of ground to be disputed from the outset. Every inch of ground was disputed along the whole line, from Round Top to the Peach Orchard. Warren, who comes with Meade, goes to Round Top to reconnoitre. Seeing the efforts of the enemy to envelop my left, quickly discerning the importance of Round Top and the enemy's desire to seize it, Warren sends to me for a brigade. I have none to spare, needing every man, and more, on my front. I advise him to send to the Fifth Corps, already on the march toward us. Another message from Warren, saying the heads of column of the Fifth Corps are still distant and may arrive too late. We have seen it was not ordered over from the right until after 3 o'clock. At this moment the gallant and gifted Weed, of Ayres's division, reports in person to me that his brigade is near.

Pressed by Birney for support on my left, pressed by Warren for troops to occupy Round Top, the key of our position, I send Weed to him just in time. The gallant Weed falls mortally wounded on Round Top, and Hazlett, too, was killed as he leaned

over the body of the dying Weed to hear his last words. Zook's, Cross's, and Brooke's brigades, of Caldwell's division, of Hancock's corps, arrive and are at once engaged. The full force of the enemy's attack is felt. Zook and Cross and O'Rorke are mortally wounded. Our lines waver, but rally again and again. The same ground is fought over and over. Barksdale, of Mississippi, is mortally wounded in a charge within our lines. The chivalrous Graham, on my centre, falls seriously wounded and is captured by the enemy. The brave Ellis, leading his Orange Blossoms, is killed in the Devil's Den while leading a charge of the 124th New York. Vincent and Willard are killed at the head of their brigades. Bigelow's battery, in front of my corps colors, loses more than half its men and eighty horses. Randolph and Seely are wounded. The Sixth Corps is coming, our strongest corps, and is ordered to support the left. Humphreys, Carr, Brewster, and Sewell, of my corps, are engaged. Gallant Crawford, of the Fifth Corps, with a regimental flag in his hand, leads his Pennsylvania Reserves in a charge on the enemy's flank and front and drives him out of reach. This is the same division so brilliantly led by General Meade at Fredericksburg. Humphreys still stands firm on the right. I am wounded. I turn over my command to Birney and am carried to the rear, knowing that victory is ours.

We see from this glance at the battle of July 2 that as soon as our troops on the left equalled those of the enemy the battle was decided in our favor. If this equality had existed at the outset of the conflict, our victory would have been decisive early in the action, and the Sixth Corps, our strongest, would have been available to follow up our success and deal a decisive blow to the enemy; and if Buford's division of cavalry had remained on the left flank, its coöperation would have given us overwhelming advantages. With two corps, say twenty-five thousand men, holding the left, intrenched in good positions, holding Round Top and commanding the ridges and roads on our left, the repulse of the enemy would have been as disastrous to them as our assault on their lines at Fredericksburg was destructive to us. With the Fifth Corps in reserve on the left, our fight would have been an easier one, but Sykes was not engaged until 5 o'clock.

A signal feature of this battle was the buoyancy of the troops, their readiness to respond to commands, the eagerness of chiefs of battalions, batteries, and brigades to support each other, often

without formal orders. The charges and countercharges between sunset and dusk would take pages to describe. The impetuosity of the men and their field leaders in the Second, Third, and Fifth Corps was a priceless factor, without which our victory would not have been achieved. And it is remarkable, as showing the fierceness of the struggle on the 2d of July, that the losses of the enemy in both Hood's and McLaws's divisions exceeded the losses in killed and wounded in Pickett's division on the following day. The losses on both sides on the second day were greater in killed and wounded than the combined losses suffered on the first and third days of the battle. It is a moderate and safe estimate of the enemy's forces engaged on the second day to place them at thirty thousand infantry and eighty pieces of artillery. Hood's, McLaws's and Anderson's divisions included thirteen brigades of at least twenty-five hundred men each. The artillery of Longstreet's and Hill's corps amounted to one hundred and forty-four guns.

At the close of the battle of the 2d, after the enemy retired, the disposition of our forces remained as already described, except that a portion of the First Corps was moved to the left of Cemetery Ridge, the Third Corps under Birney, in support; Carr's brigade, of the Third Corps, slept on the field, in its position on my right. On the other flank, at Culp's Hill, the enemy had gained a foothold in our works during the absence of a considerable part of the Twelfth Corps, under Williams, which was ordered to our left, but Greene's brigade fought like a division and held the enemy, until Slocum, commanding our right wing, brought back his forces and drove Ewell once more to his position.

We pass over the council of war on the night of the 2d without comment, since it had no result. We stayed and fought it out at Gettysburg. General Lee persisted in his offensive tactics, against the remonstrance of Longstreet, and notwithstanding that our left had been made so strong as to resist the assaults of thirty thousand men the day before, General Lee rashly attempted to break our lines with eighteen thousand men on the 3d. It is true he expected the coöperation of Stuart's cavalry on our rear, but our cavalry, Gregg on our right and Kilpatrick on our left, had destroyed that hope, inflicting decisive defeats on Stuart, whose object Pleasonton, Gregg, and Kilpatrick quickly divined.

The great cavalry combat of Gregg we hear described by him-

self in modest, yet vivid, colors. Scarcely mentioned in the official reports, yet we see it was one of the most brilliant incidents of the Gettysburg campaign. Twelve thousand sabres flashing in the July sun on the open fields beyond our right. The thunder of two hundred cannon echoing from the main army answered Gregg's and Stuart's artillery. The ripening grain withered under the tread of heavy columns—columns of squadrons charging again and again, whilst the reapers of Gregg and Custer gathered a harvest of honor and fame.

Kilpatrick, too, with his division of cavalry, supported our left, besides the Fifth and Sixth Corps and a portion of the First, with the Third in reserve. Kilpatrick's cavalry battle on the 3d was no less effective on our left, as from this flank also the enemy's cavalry attempted to gain our rear and unite with Longstreet in piercing our left centre. In this fight the gallant Farnsworth fell. "A general on the 29th, on the 30th he baptized his star in blood, and on July 3d, for the honor of his young brigade and the glory of his corps, he gave his life. At the head of his dragoons, at the very muzzles of the enemy's guns, he fell with many mortal wounds." So writes Kilpatrick.

The story of the third day has been so often told in all its dramatic details that it has become a familiar picture of the battle of Gettysburg. It need not be repeated here. We had won the battle. Longstreet pronounced the enemy's last assault hopeless from the beginning. No troops, he said, however valiant, whatever their discipline, could make any serious impression on our left or left centre, the direction of the attack. So profoundly was he impressed with the forlorn and desperate character of the assault that he was unable, he says, to give utterance to the order to Pickett. In reply to Pickett's demand whether he should move, Longstreet could only nod his head in the affirmative. The assault ended, as Longstreet had foreseen, in the annihilation of the advancing columns of the enemy; a useless sacrifice of brave men, sometimes necessary in war, but not required on that day to vindicate the courage and discipline or fortitude of Lee's great army.

The headquarters staff was marked by signal ability. Butterfield had been already distinguished as a commander in the field. In the movement of large columns he had no superior in our armies. Hunt, our chief of artillery, would have won distinction

under Napoleon. He was ably supported by Tyler, commanding the reserve artillery. Warren, chief of engineers, was accomplished both in his special corps and as a commander. Pleasonton, chief of the cavalry corps, made his arm superior to that of the enemy in every equal combat. Besides, he was gifted with rare military intuitions. He sent Buford, with our strongest cavalry division, to Gettysburg, when nobody had divined the place chosen by Lee to concentrate his army for battle. He sent Gregg to our right to encounter Stuart and thwart his movement to our rear ; on the third day, the day of Pickett's assault, he sent Kilpatrick on our left, where the enemy attempted a similar diversion, but was defeated.

Our army corps were ably commanded. Sedgwick, Reynolds, Slocum, Hancock, Howard, Newton, Doubleday, and Birney were all strong men, each differing from the others in elements of strength, yet forming a group of remarkable power. General Slocum and General Howard were chosen afterwards by General Sherman to command the right and left wings, respectively, of his great army in its famous campaign through Georgia. In the campaign of Gettysburg we lost three corps commanders—Reynolds, killed on the 1st of July ; Sickles, wounded on the 2d ; and Hancock on the 3d.

As Lincoln said to me, "There was glory enough at Gettysburg to go all round, from Meade to the humblest enlisted man in the ranks."

Military men are fond of comparisons between Waterloo and Gettysburg. There are, indeed, several military resemblances, but more contrasts ; whilst in moral and political significance these two great battles are as wide apart as the fields themselves. Waterloo put an end to the rule of Napoleon and the military supremacy of France in Europe, already impaired by the campaign in Russia. Gettysburg upheld the authority of the wise and unselfish Lincoln, and assured the perpetuity of the American Union. Waterloo was the triumph of the reigning monarchs of Europe over the French Revolution. Gettysburg prevented an alliance between the Southern Confederacy and England and France to divide and destroy the United States. Waterloo restored France to the Bourbons. Gettysburg severed the chains from every slave in America, giving force and effect to Lincoln's Proclamation of Emancipation, which before was only an edict.

And here at Gettysburg I hope that the War Department will

establish a permanent military post, garrisoned by artillery, and that on this consecrated ground, all of which should belong to the government, the morning and evening gun may forever salute "the men who here gave their lives that the nation might live."

DANIEL E. SICKLES,

Major-General U. S. Army (retired).

GENERAL GREGG :

WHEN those two giants of the War of the Rebellion, the Armies of the Potomac and of Northern Virginia, had determined, by invitation of the latter, to seek a new field of combat far removed from the desolated plains of Virginia, that of Gettysburg was well chosen. Its commanding eminences, with the undulating vale between, all under cultivation, with here and there open groves of goodly trees, gave to the infantry and artillery of the combatants all that could be desired for effective attack and defence. Off on the flanks were fair and wide fields for mounted cavalry by thousands to mingle in wild mêlée, where pistol and sabre did their keenest work, and light batteries scattered canister most grievously in the faces of their would-be captors.

A field which made it possible for a great battle to be fought to the finish, in which each of the three arms of service was properly employed in its own sphere, and thus rendered its most effective service. There were attacks sublime in execution even to the point of their failure, which only occurred because success was impossible. Resistance was heroic. Surprises there were none, but there were many mighty rushes.

On one of the bright days of October last, on this famous field were assembled some eight generals and a smaller number of officers of lesser rank, all having served in the Union army in the battle of Gettysburg. Of the general officers, five had been corps commanders, one the chief of staff, and the remaining two division commanders of infantry and cavalry respectively. They were in attendance upon the distinguished historian of the War of the Rebellion, the Count of Paris, with whom all had served on the peninsular campaign.

The same sky was above. Round Top, Culp's Hill, and Brinkerhoff Ridge, the village with the seminary and cemetery, were all there. The stage was the same, but where were the

actors? where the great masses of men that were clad in blue and in gray? Could there be a reassembling of the mighty armies that contested this field twenty-seven years ago, those that could appear in the flesh would be outnumbered by the ghostly representatives of the dead. Nor have these assembled officers escaped the change that time works. When the battle was fought, the oldest of them had not more than reached the full maturity of manhood; and now the youngest could only claim to be in the old age of youth or the youth of old age.

It was a pleasant meeting. There were a kindness of greeting and heartiness of grasp that plainly showed how glad these old soldiers were to meet again, some not having met since the close of the war. As each stood upon the portion of the field where his command engaged the enemy, his story was briefly told. Indeed, it was scarcely more than pointing out lines and positions. The historian was not here so much to learn as to verify. A question asked, he was quick to be the narrator.

The entire field having been gone over, the party separated, all feeling that the day had been pleasantly and profitably spent. The old battlefield has dotted over it along the entire Union line monuments both beautiful and chaste, but the work of adornment is incomplete. On some commanding point near the centre of the line there should rise a colossal monument to the memory of the commander of the Army of the Potomac, George Gordon Meade. It should be built of material as pure as his character and as enduring as his fame.

In front of it, and just beyond the reach of its tallest shadow, there should be another to his able lieutenant, Winfield Scott Hancock, who on this and a score of other fields showed that his first commander had not erred in styling him "superb."

D. MM. GREGG.

GENERAL NEWTON:

THE recent visit to the field of Gettysburg in company with the Comte de Paris, the Duc d'Orleans, and the gentlemen who accompanied them to this country, was an interesting event, whether regarded in the light of bringing the distinguished historian of our Civil War face to face with the military features of that great battlefield, or of affording a few of the survivors of the battle, who escorted the party, the opportunity of renewing

their memories of the deadly and gigantic struggle, which was a turning-point in the fortunes of the Union and of the Confederacy.

Thanks to the liberality of the governments, national and State, the individual share which each organization, on the Union side at least, took in the battle is recorded in words and in many cases in stone monuments, and adequate information has also been collected in regard to the Confederate forces ; so that all that is required, beyond what has been done and is now in progress, is the historian who is capable, from the immense magazine of facts placed at his disposal, to group these scientifically in the relation of cause to effect, and to correct history, may be, by assigning anew to the prominent leaders on either side their just measure of praise or censure.

I do not think it possible to have gone the rounds of that field, listening to the simple, and in the main accurate, accounts of the incidents of the contest from the lips of the guides, without being profoundly moved.

Beginning with the action of the first day, we see the First and the Eleventh Corps displayed in an arc of a circle, covering the roads from Chambersburg and York, respectively, to Gettysburg. The Third Confederate Corps, Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill, from Chambersburg attack the First Corps on the Seminary Ridge, and the Second Confederate Corps, Lieutenant-General R. S. Ewell, from York attack the position of the Eleventh Corps. The contest, with unequal numbers against the First Corps, wages fiercely for hours, until after the lines of the Eleventh Corps were forced by the enemy. This exposed the line of retreat of the First Corps, and numbers were captured subsequently in the attempt to fall back through Gettysburg to the Cemetery Ridge. In this affair that splendid soldier General Reynolds, commanding the Union troops, fell early in the day.

The fault, if any, of the First Corps was in the obstinacy of their resistance, and in bravely prolonging the fight after their right flank and rear had become exposed. Who is responsible for the failure to give the order to fall back in season, it is not proposed to discuss in this article.

The position of the Eleventh Corps was, in a military sense, a nearly smooth plain, which afforded the opportunity for a magnificent display of artillery. A competent force of guns here would

have checked Ewell, or at least have seriously delayed him, and the disaster to the First Corps from having its flank and rear turned would have been prevented.

Another inquiry pertinent to the occasion is why the Union forces, which operated on interior lines with respect to the enemy, should in this first important action have appeared on the field with inferior forces. This in itself was a great blunder.

The remnants of the First Corps and the Eleventh Corps took position on the Cemetery Ridge, where they were early reënforced by the Twelfth Corps, which occupied Culp's Hill and formed the extreme right of the Army of the Potomac during this and the subsequent days.

General Lee, after having a reconnoissance made of the new position of the Union forces on Cemetery Ridge, declined a further attack that day, although with the superior Confederate force upon the field the chances of success under the circumstances, by a flank movement to the right, would have been good. As a result of the battle of the first day (July 1), the First Corps was reduced to about 3,300 men, and one of the divisions of the corps to 900 men. On the second day a new Vermont brigade was assigned to the Third Division, making the total of the corps between 6,000 and 7,000 men. The Eleventh Corps suffered, but not so severely.

Just here, to prevent misconception, it is necessary to state that the term "corps" as applied to organizations in the Union army was often a misnomer, as some of the corps might in respect to numbers be properly called divisions. The Confederate corps deserved the name.

Until some statistician devotes himself to an elaborate analysis of the battle returns of the Union and Confederate armies, it is impossible in most cases to ascertain the relative strength of either in their engagements; for while the Confederates counted the men in line of battle, the Union authorities stupidly relied upon the muster returns for the strength of their armies. Consequently it was seldom possible to ascertain, even approximately, the actual number present in battle. There were other causes of a selfish nature which sometimes swelled on paper the number in regiments.

On the night of the 1st of July Ewell's corps was in Gettysburg, with the left threatening Culp's Hill; Hill's corps occupied

the Seminary Ridge. Two divisions of Longstreet's were four miles from Gettysburg; the other division, Pickett's, was absent and not available for service on the second day.

On the Union side the Twelfth Corps occupied the extreme right at Culp's Hill; next came Wadsworth's division of the First Corps; then the Eleventh Corps on Cemetery Ridge; on their left Robinson's division of the First Corps. The portion of the Third Corps that had come up occupied the extreme left of Meade's forces present on the field.

A long space from the left of the Third Corps to and including the Round Top was entirely unguarded, and this fact, as well as the easy nature of the ground, invited an attack here from the enemy.

The testimony is direct and not to be questioned that Longstreet was ordered by General Lee to attack early in the morning of July 2 with two divisions of his corps, supported by Anderson's division of Hill's corps, and turn the Union left before reinforcements, which were the Second, Fifth, and Sixth Corps and a portion of the Third, should arrive. As soon as Longstreet's guns opened, Ewell was to assail our right and Hill to lend such assistance to both as the case might demand.

A vigorous and concerted attack of this nature could scarcely, in the absence of more than half of the Army of the Potomac, have failed of success by cutting that army in two, and thus have caused a disaster which it is unpleasant even now to contemplate. At all events, even if interrupted in complete success by the arrival of the Second Corps, which took place about 7 A.M., still the Confederates could have seized the Round Top, which alone would have rendered the position of the Union army untenable.

Longstreet did not attack, and his reasons for abstaining have never seen the light.

On the other hand, the serious nature of the mistake that was made in permitting a dispersion of the Union forces at the critical moment of the campaign is thus brought home to the mind of every one.

After the arrival of the Second Corps, which took up the position occupied by the Third Corps, the latter advanced to the front beyond the general line, and occupied the place which has become historic as the Peach Orchard. This spot, the Devil's Den, the rocky slopes leading to the summit, and the Round Top

itself, became on that eventful afternoon the theatre of a bloody and memorable contest between the Third Corps and portions of the other corps on one side and Longstreet's forces on the other. Longstreet did not attack until 4 P.M., and up to that moment, and even for some time beyond it, he might have seized the Round Top, for the attention of the Union commander does not appear to have been called to its importance until a late hour of the day.

Notwithstanding the bloody results of the day to the Union forces, who fought under the peculiar disadvantage of having to meet the initiative of the enemy without a well-defined plan of their own, the end was, on the whole, favorable, as, after two days of apparent reverses, they found themselves *hammered* into a good position.

I had the opportunity to express this idea in the way of congratulation to General Meade at nightfall of the 2d of July, when the battle of the day was over.

The intrenched lines of the Twelfth Corps on the right were on this afternoon considerably stripped of troops, and Johnson's division of Ewell's corps took advantage of this fact to occupy a portion. To anticipate events a little, on the morning of the 3d of July, at a very early hour, Johnson was attacked, and after a fierce struggle was forced to leave, and the Twelfth Corps resumed full possession of its first position.

The visit paid to the little old building which was General Meade's headquarters during the battle revived recollections of the council of war held on the night of the 2d of July, which has been so variously represented that a simple statement of its proceedings is in order here. After calling from each corps commander for a field return of the number of his troops, the discussion turned on the probabilities of the morrow. All agreed, so far as I remember, that the position in itself was a good one, but I suggested the possibility of an attempt to turn our left, which could be done with a whole corps secretly at night and without breaking or weakening too much the Confederate lines; that we ought to look to it by having a force there to prevent such a demonstration. General Meade said that Lee would attack the next day on the easy ground between the Cemetery and Round Top. I replied that I thought General Lee too good a soldier to do that, as he would infallibly be badly whipped. We were both

correct, it seems ; General Lee did attack, and at the same time he was badly whipped. For the rest, the council unanimously voted to fight it out on the position we held. A force also was sent to watch for any attempt to turn the left flank.

Early on the morning of the 3d of July, about daybreak, a terrific fire of musketry at the position of the Twelfth Corps gave notice that the contest with Johnson's Confederate division had begun.

The Third Division of the First had the evening before taken post on the left of the Second Corps, and on the morning of the 3d I found that our line thence to the Round Top was very incomplete. Reporting the fact to General Meade, I was directed to get troops from the Sixth Corps, and batteries from the reserve artillery to fill out the empty spaces. By my official report it was about noon before this was completed. Longstreet meanwhile had been ordered to attack early ; he had at his disposal Pickett's, Hood's, and McLaws's divisions of his corps, and R. H. Anderson's division of Hill's corps, and, later, Heth's and Pender's division of the same corps ; this attack was to be supported with artillery.

The attack was not made early or with all the force that was available ; neither was it supported by the artillery, because that arm had beforehand exhausted, it is said, its ammunition. This defect was not made known to General Lee before the attack was made.

It is a matter of speculation what would have been the result if the attack had been made in full force, supported by artillery, early in the day, before our lines on the left to the Round Top had been consolidated.

It has been the occasion of unfavorable criticism of General Meade that, on the repulse of the final charge, he did not take aggressive action. I think, however, a candid consideration of all the circumstances will show that little benefit could have followed such a movement.

The same might be said of an attempt to press the Confederates in their retreat to the Potomac. In the broken and wooded country traversed by them numberless positions for defence offered themselves, and the assailants would have suffered out of all proportion to the defenders. Finally, the proposed attack on the Confederate lines at Williamsport was pronounced folly by the most experienced officers of the Army of the Potomac.

I have not attempted criticism, except of the scattered condition of our army on the first and second days, but I give facts sufficient to attract the attention of historians and thereby to lead to a full investigation and thorough analysis of this battle.

JOHN NEWTON,

Commanding First Corps, 2d and 3d July, 1863.

GENERAL BUTTERFIELD:

THE successful reunion of the surviving corps commanders at Gettysburg to meet the Comte de Paris—save only the thorough soldier Gibbon, of the Second Corps, stationed so far away on the Pacific as to cause no effort for his presence through the uncertainty of our date, and the able cavalry commander Pleasonton, an invalid and unable to respond to the call—left nothing other than their absence to regret.

Time was cut short from the Gettysburg programme by the most interesting tour of the previous day, which covered the battle-grounds of Harper's Ferry, Bolivar Heights, and Antietam, with a charming trip to the Mountain House. None of us will forget the vivid picture of the battle of Antietam so clearly drawn and pointed out from the Confederate side by Colonel Kyd Douglas. The mountain view repaid us for the loss of the two hours of that afternoon intended for Gregg's cavalry fight. But we were fortunate enough to get that next day.

The well-known and competent guide, Long, who has a correct knowledge of all roads, lines, and positions of organizations of both armies in the battle, was placed with the driver of the first carriage to show the route selected. This carriage contained always the Comte de Paris, the Duc d'Orleans, his son, and the corps commander of the particular line or position where we were, changing as required. An order of the day had been prepared, and, by the courtesy of the railway staff of General Orland Smith, copied and distributed. Each commander was thus prepared in advance for the journey over his lines. Colonel de Parseval, the Duc d'Uzes, and Captain Treat rode near the leading carriage, and thus we were well organized for the tour of the battlefield.

The programme was as thoroughly adhered to and complied with by all present, through the force of soldierly habit, the

evident necessity for our purpose, and the character of the assemblage, as if a military order from a supreme commander. Recognition of this feature is a double satisfaction in that it is a pleasure and a duty.

All went smoothly. Surprises were not looked for, but they came—of exceeding interest to most of us ; to none more than the writer.

Howard's and Doubleday's descriptions of the first day's battle and the movements of glorious Buford's cavalry and the First and Eleventh Corps gave a clearer understanding of the extent of the lines, the work done, the ability shown on that day, with the unfavorable conditions existing on our side, which were never so clearly understood and appreciated before by many of those present.

The guide's face showed profound astonishment when the Count pointed out, before they were indicated to him, positions and localities he had never seen. For the first time on the field, previous study of the battle and the War Department maps had made him as familiar with it as if he had fought the battle.

In the first half-hour the Count ventured to correct an accidental error as to a locality indicated by one of our number ; and the Count was right. It was simply marvellous to us all, this faculty and knowledge of our gallant comrade and historian.

The current of affairs going smoothly gave moments for thought and recall of incidents, between the clear and cold analytical statements (if one might use the expression) of the corps commanders as to their lines, positions, and movements, and those of the enemy. The guide furnished occasionally, when requested,—with more poetic license of description than a military report ordinarily carries,—a glowing word-picture of the battle's phases, replete with details as to the location of troops and commands engaged on both sides. By this we first knew what was told to the world of visitors to the field. It was a surprise again to find so much accuracy in the recital as to position and commands. Many things were not told. How could they be ? They were not known.

Overlooking the field, and hearing a side discussion as to the opening of the battle, recalled the incident of General Hooker's words in laying down a map of Pennsylvania and Maryland early in June. By the light of subsequent events it seemed a marvellous inspiration or intuition.

“They are worrying at Washington and throughout the North,” said he, “fearing we shall permit Lee’s army to get across the Potomac. If he would not cross otherwise, I would lay the bridges for him and give him a safe pass across the river. But he will cross, and we must endeavor to guide his march *there*.”

Suiting the action to his words, he pointed on the map to the Williamsport crossing, and, running his finger along the west side of South Mountain Range, stopped at the point where the shading indicated a break or pass, saying :

“He will go on this route, and we will fight the battle *here*, and, before we fight it, concentrate troops enough from all available sources to prevent Lee’s return. If he gets away with his army, the country can have my head for a football, and will be entitled to it.”

The battle point indicated was Gettysburg !

Subsequently to this conversation an order to proceed to Washington and Baltimore, securing 15,000 troops from Heintzelman’s command at the capital and Schenck’s in Maryland, and place them near the passes of the South Mountain, failed through General Halleck’s declaration to President Lincoln, in my presence, that such withdrawal would endanger Washington. Schenck freely offered what could be assembled and spared from his command. The result was a Maryland brigade only. The 7th New York (city) National Guard was offered, and many of them were anxious to go. But it was decided to leave them in Baltimore.

The refusal by Halleck of this column strengthened Hooker’s feeling that there was a want of proper support at headquarters, and culminated with the Harper’s Ferry incident of the like refusal of French’s 10,000 and Hooker’s request to be relieved. He said there was too much at stake to permit any personal feeling, and he felt it his duty to ask to be relieved, and the command given to some one who would receive all support.

In a private conversation with President Lincoln at the camp at headquarters, after Chancellorsville, Hooker had indicated to the President his unbounded confidence in Reynolds and Meade as capable commanders for that or any army.

But three days in advance of the impending and intended battle, one of the most self-contained, conservative, quiet, and at the same time gallant, soldiers of the Army of the Potomac

was called out of bed before daylight—an utter surprise to himself—and placed in command of the army. So quiet and unobtrusive were the ways of General Meade that he was in some parts of the army almost personally unknown. All knew of his gallant fight at Fredericksburg. He thought to assemble the army at Frederick, and have a review, to see and know and be known by those portions of the army with which he was not familiar. Upon receiving an explanation of the entire situation, he assented to the continued march of our columns prepared for the next day, and the programme of Hooker's movement after French's column was refused him was carried out unchanged until Reynolds reached Gettysburg and met the enemy. Hooker was to send French, under the command of Slocum, with the Twelfth Corps upon Lee's line of communications. This was abandoned when French's troops were denied him.

But we are not to fight the battle over again in this article. It would take more than a number of *THE REVIEW* to place in the record much that would be of interest. More will be interested, perhaps, in impressions and reminiscences. So many years after, men then unborn are now living and important factors in the body politic. It would seem hardly possible that they could realize what Gettysburg meant without the personal experience of the time.

The absolute self-possession and quiet demeanor of the corps commanders present at this (in war history) unique assemblage so many years after the battle, though marked, was not as strongly marked as the same characteristic of all during the three days' fighting. It strongly and forcibly recalled it.

Typical of this, it brought back Meade sitting quietly on the little grass plot at the roadside of the headquarters house, in the midst of the battle; shells bursting constantly every few minutes and officers' horses disabled; surrounded by a small group of staff officers attached to headquarters; telling, as quietly as if at a quiet home in a peaceful glen, an interesting experience and incident of his career as a young officer. Generals Sharpe, the loved Seth Williams, Perkins, and others were of the group. The world might naturally suppose that, with the immense responsibility so suddenly placed upon him unsought and unexpected, Meade might have been a trifle nervous or excited. If he was, he never betrayed it. This self-possession and absolute coolness, so

marked throughout that battle on the part not only of the principal commanders, but of most of the subordinates, was more strong and pronounced, to so express it, than in any of a score of battles of personal recollection and experience.

Slocum was much more quiet and collected on the night of the council of war (after the second day's battle), when, reclining with almost absolute nonchalance, he answered, as his vote on the proposition of a change of our position, "*Stay and fight it out,*" than he was when listening to the words of Howard, Doubleday, Gregg, and the others so many years after. He did not tell us why the proposal to which he had assented, and for which he held his command ready, to follow up the repulse of Pickett's assault, was not accepted or approved.

We never thought to ask him of the truth of the story current of the oldest living and one of the bravest of Gettysburg's veterans, General Greene, beloved by us all—that in the midst of the darkness and night of the second day he stood almost within the enemy's lines under orders to retake his former position, and ordered his command, although they were a long way out of reach of his voice, as though present, with the successful purpose of retarding the enemy's movement until his own men could get there.

Howard seemed more calm and collected at headquarters under fire on the second day's battle, when explaining the position of his troops with reference to the withdrawal in *échelon* ordered, but not begun,*—stopped by Longstreet's attack on Sickles,—than he was standing on tiptoe, all aglow, listening to Gregg, or telling of his own movements so interestedly and energetically.

Sickles was more calm and unmoved on the second day's fight, when he came to the headquarters council called, but not held, for a joint understanding of the proposed movement, and announced the battle opening on his front, than he was sitting on the rocks at Little Round Top, listening to the story we asked the guide to tell as he told it to battlefield visitors. From the first-mentioned encounter Sickles was carried away minus a leg, but with lasting honor. He gained another crown of honor on our visit, in the thought of some of us, since he never mentioned his initiative and strong demand repeated to headquarters for the occupation of

* The original order-book of headquarters containing this order has been destroyed or lost, and is not at the War Department.

that position which caused Warren to be sent where his statue now stands.

Dear General Wright, gallant, quiet, modest to the extreme, was far less demonstrative in manner, language, and mood (not in force) so many years ago than he was when his quiet yet decided manner gave about the only corrective suggestion made during the day to the guide's story of any of the movements.

Newton's genial and calm temperament seemed, if anything, no less marked than when he said to Meade, to the latter's apparent disgust, on the evening of the second day's battle :

"General Meade, I think you ought to feel much gratified with to-day's results."

"In the name of common-sense, Newton, why?" was the inquiry in reply.

"Why," said Newton, with his pleasant expression and smile, "they have hammered us into a solid position they cannot whip us out of."

Doubleday's strength was sorely tested, invalid as he is, in the severe ascent to the belfry of the seminary. His clear and lucid description of Buford's work and his own on the first day of the fight, before and after Reynolds's death, and his explanation of the splendid *coup* of Robinson, with Wadsworth's and Fairchild's work, were interrupted and broken, but not impaired, by inability quickly to regain breath and strength after climbing such a height. He was much more quiet and composed during the battle days.

Gregg, with his courteous, high-bred manner, briefly described in the clearest way his brilliant cavalry fight. One would hardly have thought he was a participant, so modestly and tranquilly he spoke. He seemed not a day older nor a whit changed in any respect (save being in mufti) from the *beau sabreur* and quiet gentleman who always rode so tranquilly at the head of his command in or out of the fight.

At the visit to headquarters the scene and the discussions of the council of war on the night of the second day's battle were recalled. The recollections by all after so many years were in entire accord, with the slight exception that one commander thought Meade used the language, in expressing his opinion, that "Gettysburg was no place to fight a battle," instead of "Gettysburg is no place to fight a battle." The trifling difference was not worth discussion, since all agreed so closely.

There were recollections, musings, regrets, on that day, not alone by the writer, but, I think, more or less by all. They would fill a volume, and would be of interest to survivors of that field.

There was a strong regret that the good people of Philadelphia or Pennsylvania had not placed the equestrian statue of Meade on that field, where it belongs, rather than in Fairmount Park. It was Meade's victory, as it would have been his defeat had it terminated in the enemy's favor. Everybody who goes there, and who will go, will always wish to see the commander as he was. Perhaps Pennsylvania will yet do it. What a group it would be to place in the field where the wooden observatory is, opposite the cemetery! Equestrian statues, life-size, of Meade, Reynolds, Hancock, Sedgwick, Wadsworth, Buford, Humphreys, Sykes, Birney, and others gone, as they were in life in that battle, and the gallant commanders yet living who will follow them to a future crown!

Whatever we may have thought in years ago, with less reflection and no knowledge of present results, speculation as to what might have occurred is but speculation. We know what the Army of the Potomac did at Malvern Hill after previous defeats, and we realize that our opponents were not to be undervalued for courage or tenacity. They proved it in our fighting days, as did their ancestry side by side with ours in the days of '76, at Yorktown, Saratoga, and the other fields of the Revolution. That they believed they were right, while we fought because we thought we knew they were wrong, passes unchallenged into history.

We cannot blame the prudence and conservative judgment that led Meade not to stake what, in case of failure, might perhaps have caused a fatal result to our Union. His great responsibility did not descend below the commander or to those of us who would have had it otherwise.

Some of us believe that it was a good Providence that endowed him with caution, if the consciousness of his grave responsibility did not of itself do it. We believe that his unquestioned bravery in obeying orders carried with it a saving and prudent judgment when he personally commanded; that it was better for the country, for all sides, that the fighting was not pushed for the conclusion and results we then thought and still think might have been possible, and that we can be profoundly grateful for the results as they stand to-day.

It is not to be wondered at that there are many honestly mistaken as to the real effect and results of their own work in this battle, tactically of accident, strategically of purpose.

Many subordinate commanders to this day think their action won the battle, which would have been lost but for the combined work of all. It will never cease to be a regret to every true soldier that the full and just meed of recognition has not been given to all who deserved so much on that field.

There is no reason why the Illinois cavalryman should not have honestly supposed he was right when he marked the spot where he believed he fired the first shot of the battle about 7 A.M. July 1. He was ignorant of the fact that one of the 6th New York Cavalry had opened the fire some hours before at daylight. Although ordered not to fire at night, he reasoned that his orders not to fire during the night ended with daybreak, and he fired into the fog at the sound of the enemy's cavalry close to his picket post, though he could not see them—a lucky shot, in that it halted the advance of the enemy for the time. They could not see him. It added time for concentration.

It would be of great interest to know if the great and glorious soldier, Reynolds, who was fully apprised of Hooker's views and purposes, had in his mind the actual battlefield of the second and third days, and moved in front of it on that morning to give time for and cover the necessary concentration of our army, which he knew we could make by our distances as soon as, if not sooner than, Lee's entire army could. The battle-field memorial association will, we hope, some day, get light on many such points of interest. They have done and are doing excellent work.

It is not worth while to speculate upon a proposition to which there can never be an answer or positive solution. We could not rewrite the history of Europe if Wellington had been defeated at Waterloo, nor the result if we had failed at Gettysburg. Hence it is only speculation and opinion, with no certainty, as to what would have occurred had Lee adhered to the stated forecast of his campaign that it should be "strategically offensive" and "tactically defensive," leaving us to be the attacking party. We must always be grateful that Lee changed this. So theories or speculations as to the result had Hooker retained command are idle, as well as what would have occurred had Slocum been per-

mitted to enter upon the pursuit after Pickett's repulse, backed by a division of the Sixth Corps, as he was ready to do.

Nor need we speculate on the results if Sickles's position on the second day had not prevented Longstreet's junction with the force sent to our rear for that purpose or any withdrawal from our position, or on what result would have occurred if the magnetic, forceful, and impetuous Stonewall Jackson had been there commanding the force coöperating with Longstreet. We may on both sides cherish theories of results, but they are vain and idle. There are dangers before us now from virtually the same causes that brought on the War of the Rebellion—*avarice, greed, and selfishness*—that we may rather speculate upon with the hope to counteract.

We may, and we should be, profoundly thankful that results are as they now exist; more than grateful to the splendid, brave old Army of the Potomac, down to the last soldier on its fighting rolls, before, and at, and after the days of Gettysburg. It never proved more thoroughly or strongly its great discipline, organization, patriotism, and endurance than in those eventful days. Its memory and its lustre will never grow dim with us, and will always reflect with added brilliancy the glories of the armies of the West, of the Tennessee, the Cumberland (its glorious Western counterpart), and the Ohio. This light and lustre in all the armies came from the same source—the soldier in the ranks. He was always of good material, and ever showed it when trained and led by competent officers—sometimes without such leadership.

How appropriate here the words of our greatest soldier, Grant! How true!

“My sympathies are with every movement which aims to acknowledge our indebtedness to the private soldier—the countless, nameless, often disregarded, heroes of the musket and bayonet, to whose true patriotism, patient endurance, and fiery courage on the day of danger we who are generals owe victory, and the country will yet owe its salvation.” (Grant's speech in 1863.)

Gettysburg, so often called the “soldiers' battle,” appreciatively bears monuments from their States on the lines where they fought. We ought to place there monuments to mark the lines of our opponents, now, we trust, forever our fellow-citizens. The display of their great courage emphasizes that of our own brave men.

DANIEL BUTTERFIELD.